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ABSTRACT

Claiming that observation is the first and most authentic tool for assessing young children's learning and development, this book advises educators of young children how to improve observation skills by recording children's growth and development. The book also serves as a tool to evaluate and improve early childhood programs. Specific benefits of observation for teachers, children and families include the following: (1) getting to know children as individuals with unique personalities; (2) basing educational decisions on the children in the program; (3) understanding what children know and are learning; (4) enriching personal lives and broadening understanding of the world; and (5) providing important raw material to help families see and understand their child's progress. The book is divided into six chapters: (1) "Looking and Seeing Are Different: What Is Observation of Young Children All About?"; (2) "Figuring Out the Puzzle: How Observation Pieces Fit Together"; (3) "How To's and Other Clues"; (4) "'Mary, Mary Quite Contrary. How Does Your Garden Grow?' Tools To Cultivate Observation Skills"; (5) "On the Importance of Being Organized"; and (6) "Observation Dividends: 'What's in It for Me?'" (Contains 15 references.) (SD)

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